

AN ALCOHOL-SAFE AND DRUG-FREE

HOLIDAY

SEASON

TO REMEMBER

Editor's Media Kit — 2001



**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental  
Health Services Administration

**CSAP** Center for  
Substance Abuse  
Prevention



November 2001

Dear Editor:

The holiday season, while filled with joyous celebrations, may also be a time for overindulgence in alcoholic beverages. Excessive alcohol consumption can lead to an array of serious consequences such as fatalities, injuries sustained in car crashes, and ruined family celebrations.

The National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI), a service of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is providing you with the 2001 Alcohol-Safe and Drug-Free Holiday Season to Remember Media Kit to help promote alcohol-safe and drug-free holiday celebrations. The resources in the Kit can help ensure that your readers have a memorable, joyful, and healthy holiday season.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Publish the enclosed drop-in article to promote alcohol-safe and drug-free holiday events in your community.
- Use the holiday fact sheet and feature story ideas provided to support holiday-related news coverage.
- Run the enclosed print PSA throughout the holiday season to provide the public with tips on hosting safe holiday events.
- Contact us for expert spokespersons to interview for stories that address local strategies for impaired driving prevention and community efforts to encourage alcohol-safe and drug-free celebrations.
- Encourage your readers to call 1-800-729-6686 for a free copy of the 2001 Party Planning Tips for a Holiday Season to Remember.

We hope you find these resources useful in taking steps to ensure that every family in your community has a memorable, joyful, and safe holiday season.

Sincerely,

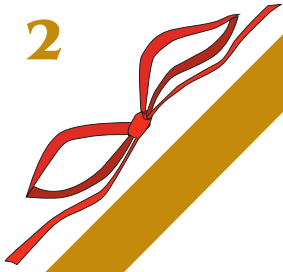


Bill Beard  
Director of Media Relations  
SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol  
and Drug Information

## Editor's Media Kit for Alcohol-Safe and Drug-Free Holiday Celebrations

- **What:** This easy-to-use Kit will help you raise public awareness about alcohol-safe and drug-free holiday celebrations.
- **When:** These materials can be used during the year-end holiday season, but also can be adapted for other observances and holiday events throughout the year.
- **Where:** Use these materials to support holiday feature stories and news coverage.
- **Who:** Use these materials to prepare for interviews and feature stories.
- **How:** Simply follow the steps outlined in this Kit.

*Please take a moment to let us know what works and what does not work for you by completing and returning the enclosed Reply Form at the back of the Toolkit.*



# Editor's Media Kit for an Alcohol-Safe and Drug-Free Holiday Season to Remember 2001

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## Talking Points for Safe Holiday Entertaining

Below are a number of talking points for your consideration. You may want to add others that reflect local audience concerns.

### 1. Hosting Alcohol-Safe and Drug-Free Holiday Parties

- Avoid making alcohol the main focus of the social event. Entertain guests with music, dancing, games, food, and lively conversation.
- Do not force non-drinkers to share the cost of alcoholic beverages. For example, if you are hosting a corporate event, separate the price of admission or food from the cost of the drinks.
- One out of three adults prefers a non-alcoholic beverage. Ensure that the choice is available at any holiday party. Offer alternatives such as sparkling water, fancy juice drinks, and soft drinks. Provide nutritious and appealing food to slow the effects of alcohol.
- Require bartenders to measure the correct amount of liquor in drinks (no doubles) and instruct them to refuse service to minors or anyone who appears to be impaired.
- Stop serving drinks at least 1 hour before the end of an event. Serve non-alcoholic beverages and desserts at that time.

### 2. Impaired Driving

- Provide drinkers with alternatives to driving. Offer your place to spend the night, call a taxi, or ask someone who was not drinking to drive your friend home.
- Despite your best efforts, some guest may find a way to overindulge. Have the phone numbers of several cab companies available, and know about any "safe ride" programs in your area.
- Be prepared. Don't let someone who has been drinking or using drugs drive. If the person insists, take the keys, ask for help from other guests, or temporarily disable the car. If necessary, say you will call the police (and do so) if all else fails. Seven million people drove under the influence of an illicit drug at some time in the past year. Most of those same people also drove while under the influence of alcohol.
- About 3 in 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives.
- In 1999, nearly 16,000 people were killed and more than 300,000 were injured as a result of alcohol-related crashes.

### 3. Facts and Figures

- More than half of Americans have not had a drink within the last 30 days.
- All States now have 21-year-old minimum drinking age laws. Make sure you don't serve alcohol to anyone underage!
- Ecstasy has become the party drug of choice for many young people, but it's not the benign drug that people think it is. Research shows that Ecstasy is both dangerous and addictive.
- An estimated 6.4 million persons have tried Ecstasy at least once in their lifetime. Know the signs of Ecstasy use: loss of coordination, dizziness, fainting, depression, confusion, sleep problems, chills or sweating, and slurred speech.



# Fact Sheet

## Substance Abuse and Impaired Driving

### Substance Abuse Statistics:

1. Almost half (46.6 percent) of Americans aged 12 and older reported being current drinkers of alcohol in 2000 (SAMHSA, 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse).
2. Use of the party/club drug known as Ecstasy increased from 0.9 percent to 2.4 percent among college students from 1991 through 1998 (National Institute on Drug Abuse, Facts About MDMA, 2000).
3. An estimated 6.4 million persons have tried Ecstasy at least once in their lifetime (SAMHSA, 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse).

### Impaired Driving Data:

1. At least 50 percent of all holiday traffic fatalities involve alcohol (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).
2. While the number of alcohol-related fatalities during holiday periods is at an all-time low (down 34 percent since 1995), impaired driving is still a leading cause of death for people under the age of 30 (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).
3. Twenty-eight percent (46.5 million) reported driving within 2 hours after drug or alcohol use (SAMHSA, 1998 Driving After Alcohol or Drug Use).
4. In 1999, nearly 16,000 people were killed and more than 300,000 were injured as a result of alcohol-related crashes (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).
5. An estimated 7 million people drove under the influence of an illicit drug at some time in the past year. Of these, most (77 percent) had also driven under the influence of alcohol (SAMHSA, 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse).
6. About 3 in 10 Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).
7. One in 10 Americans (22.3 million people) drove under the influence of alcohol at least once in the past 12 months. Between 1999 and 2000, the rate of driving under the influence of alcohol declined from 10.9 percent to 10.0 percent. Among young adults aged 18 to 25 years, 19.9 percent drove under the influence of alcohol in 2000 (SAMHSA, 2000 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse).

### Did you know?

- Holidays are especially dangerous because more people celebrate by over-drinking, making themselves susceptible to alcohol-related troubles.
- Impaired driving can occur with very low blood alcohol percentages. For most people, even one drink can affect driving skills.
- Coffee cannot sober up someone who has had too much to drink. Only time can do that. It takes 1 hour to metabolize one drink.

## Feature Story Ideas

**Blood alcohol concentration (BAC) is the percent of alcohol in the bloodstream. Most States are moving to .08 BAC for Driving While Under the Influence (DWI) convictions.**

### Story Idea — Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC): What is it, and Why Should We Be Concerned With it During the Holidays?

Write an article on BAC. Interview a member of the local police department and a representative from the academic community who can talk about this issue. Offer advice on how to prevent injuries and death caused by impaired driving during the holiday season.

### Story Idea — How to Have an Alcohol Safe Holiday Season: A Consumer Guide to Safe Holiday Alcohol Consumption.

Alcohol seems to be everywhere during the holiday season. Office parties, special holiday events, and traditional New Year's Eve celebrations focus our attention on alcohol more frequently than at any other 4-week period during the year. Feature a story advising individuals to monitor and control their alcohol intake to ensure they won't become an alcohol-related holiday statistic.

**Avoid making alcohol the main focus of the social event. Entertain guests with music, dancing, games, food, and lively conversation.**

**An average of one alcohol-related fatality occurs every 33 minutes (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration).**



### Story Idea — The Art of Being a Responsible Host: Tips on Planning an Alcohol-Safe and Drug-Free Holiday Party.

All too often alcohol is a primary focus of holiday celebrations. Not surprisingly, the percentage of drunk driving crashes typically increases during the holidays. However, communities, families, offices, and students across the country are challenging this norm. Newspaper articles can help emphasize that alcohol does not have to be the main attraction at holiday parties, and there are ways to organize fun, yet safe, holiday gatherings. Ironically, such media coverage is even more compelling after high profile alcohol-related tragedies.

**One out of three adults prefers a non-alcoholic beverage. Offer alternatives such as sparkling water, fancy juice drinks, and soft drinks.**

**First Night is an alcohol-free community celebration of the New Year with art, ritual, and festivity.**

### Story Idea — Alcohol-Safe and Drug-Free Holiday Events in Our Community.

Organize or identify alcohol-safe and drug-free holiday events where you live. For example, more than 200 communities across the country will be hosting their own versions of an alcohol-free event called First Night. Held on New Year's Eve, this is an alcohol-free, community celebration of the New Year with art, ritual, and festivity. Interview representatives from these and similar activities.

### Story Idea — Are Ecstasy and Other Club Drugs All the Rave for Your Teen This Holiday Season?

The term "club drug" refers to a wide variety of dangerous psychoactive substances often used at all-night dance parties (called "raves"), nightclubs, and concerts. But many parents are unaware that their teenagers and children use such drugs. Investigate the local party scene for club drug distribution to caution parents about the signs and symptoms of club drug impairment.

**Signs of Ecstasy Use: Problems remembering things recently said or done, loss of coordination, dizziness, fainting, depression, confusion, sleep problems, chills or sweating, and slurred speech.**



# Drop-in Article

## Celebrating the Holidays

### Tips for Organizing Alcohol-Safe and Drug-Free Parties

Alcohol is often a big part of holiday celebrations. In fact, the percentage of alcohol- and drug-related driving crashes typically increases during this time of the year. However, communities, families, offices and students across the country are challenging this norm. Many people are coming to the realization that alcohol should not be the main attraction at holiday parties, and there are ways to organize fun, yet safe, festivities that will prevent family and friends from becoming the next alcohol- or drug-related statistic.

According to experts on responsible hosting, simple precautionary steps can help ensure your guests' safety both during and after the celebration. Here are some recommendations for alcohol-safe and drug-free events:

#### Get the Party Started

- Encourage lively conversation and group activities, such as games that keep the focus on fun — not alcohol.
- Prepare plenty of foods so guests will not drink on an empty stomach, and avoid too many salty foods which tend to make people thirsty.
- Never serve alcohol to someone under the legal drinking age, and never ask children to serve alcohol.
- Make it clear that no drug use will be tolerated.

#### If You Choose to Serve Alcohol

- Offer a variety of non-alcoholic beverages for those who prefer not to drink alcohol. You could even host a contest to create non-alcoholic drink recipes.
- If you prepare an alcoholic punch, use a non-carbonated base, like fruit juice. Alcohol is absorbed into the bloodstream faster with a carbonated base.

- Don't let guests mix their own drinks. Choose a reliable bartender who abstains from alcohol at the party and who can keep track of the size and number of drinks that guests consume.

#### Before Your Guests Depart

- Stop serving alcohol 1.5 hours before the party ends because only time sobers an individual who has been drinking.
- If some guests have too much to drink, drive them home or arrange for alternate transportation.

For more information on organizing alcohol-safe and drug-free parties, contact SAMHSA's **National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 1-800-729-6686.**

#### Facts To Remember

More than half of Americans are not current drinkers.

Impaired driving can occur with very low blood alcohol percentages. For most people, even 1 drink can affect driving skills.

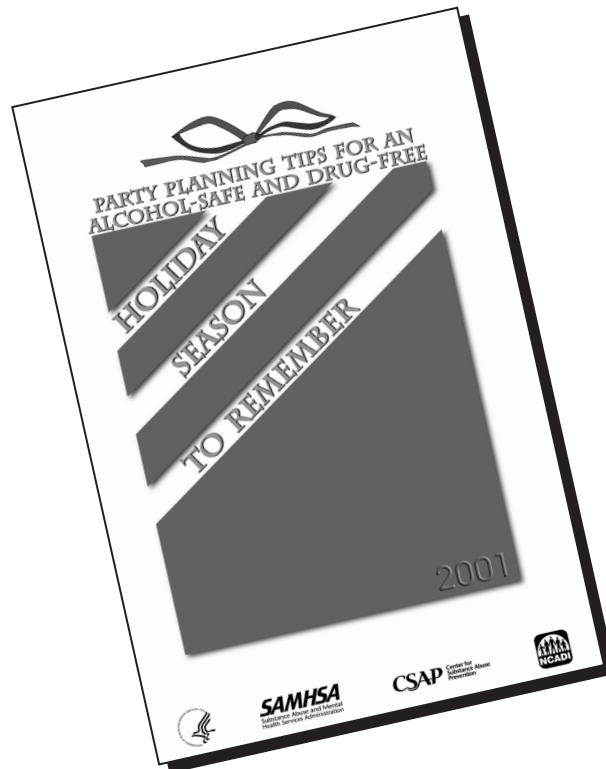
Twenty-eight percent (46.5 million) reported driving within 2 hours after drug or alcohol use (SAMHSA, 1999 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse).

At least 50 percent of all holiday traffic fatalities involve alcohol (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

Holidays are especially dangerous because more people celebrate by over- drinking, making themselves susceptible to alcohol-related troubles.

Coffee cannot sober up someone who has had too much to drink. Only time can do that. It takes 1 hour to metabolize one drink.

Give your guests the gift of a  
holiday season to remember by  
making this season's events  
alcohol-safe and drug-free.



The 2001 Party Planning Tips for a Holiday Season to Remember brochure will show you how. To request a free copy, contact SAMHSA's National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information at 1-800-729-6686 or [www.health.org](http://www.health.org).



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Prevention





## **SAMHSA Media Resources**

### **SAMHSA Media Services Line**

1-800-487-4890

SAMHSA understands editorial deadlines. A toll-free number (1-800-487-4890) has been established for media representatives to get accurate information in a timely fashion. We can also coordinate interviews with expert spokespersons on all matters related to substance abuse prevention and treatment.

### **SAMHSA Radio Newslines**

1-800-272-7723

The SAMHSA Radio Newslines provide broadcast-ready substance abuse news and public affairs reports. The audio spots feature actualities from nationally recognized experts in the fields of substance abuse prevention and treatment. Broadcast-ready Newslines reports (usually 60 to 90 seconds) can easily be folded into radio news or public affairs programming, or they can serve as a source of quotes and actualities for your own news coverage.

### **SAMHSA Media Services Web Sites**

[www.samhsa.gov/news/news.html](http://www.samhsa.gov/news/news.html)

The SAMHSA Newsroom provides SAMHSA's latest news releases, statistics, fact sheets, data, and policy reports on mental health, substance abuse prevention and treatment, managed care, and the workplace. The Web site also provides links to other SAMHSA resources.

[www.health.org/media](http://www.health.org/media)

The NCADI Newsroom is the most comprehensive online resource for journalists covering issues related to substance abuse. Be sure to check out the new and improved Newsroom with news angles, programming ideas, and other resources specifically created for the media. The NCADI Newsroom also offers press releases, links to online substance abuse-related articles (updated daily), public education information, PSA scripts, and much more.

## 2001 Holiday Kit Reply Form

Dear Editor:

Did you use...

1. Talking Points? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Fact Sheet? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Feature Story Ideas? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Drop-in Article? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Public Service Announcement (PSA)? \_\_\_\_\_

6. How many times did the PSA run? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Please rate the quality of the Kit content:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please complete the following information below:

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Address 2: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to be put on our mailing list to receive future  
PSAs/reports and press releases? \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to NCADI, ATTN: Media Relations at:

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 2345

Rockville, MD 20847-2345

or Fax Number: 301-468-6433